
RON KOERTGE: WR: 29ss, 35ss, 40, 41, 44, 51ss. 53, 58wa, 60, 61, 63cb, 72, 73, 76, 77, 80, 85, 92, 93, 97.

WHAT A VARIED PLACE THE WORLD IS
HOW TRUSTING AND STRANGE
SO DESERVING OF LOVE AND PRAISE

It was wonderful to hear the room
almost go out and then, at the prices,
flare again. It was wonderful all day,
from all 11 tracks, all 99 races,
all 900 horses brown, bay, black, roan,
grey money and numbers til the stars blur.

Tonight, full of Bohemia, lying without Bianca,
Jerry across the room asleep in his Tennis Classic
T-shirt, the light through these curtains
in Mexican.

Half a mile away, someone yawns, breathes
his coffee breath in one long hiss, mounts
the catwalk and begins to inscribe the names
from Belmont first.

Today, too, we will walk into that room
already hot as laundry and feel the voltage
of men who dressed without women, men
who sit all day reluctant to leave even
to pee, perfect in repose, perfect on
the verge, always ready to rise and dance like mad.

GETAWAY

Most leave after the feature.
Conditions for the 9th are not inviting:
for fillies and mares who find speed
unladylike, for geldings who would rather
gossip with the hots.

But nothing stops me, not in the nightcap,
not in the getaway race, last chance to beat
the other couples.

And it is often so beautiful -- sky pouring
through a sieve of clouds, sun colored
like coral lips, and the riders! They
in their helmets and I in my cap

here in the heartland, my body light
as the birthday boy's

humming some lovely anthem as I walk
from the windows hearing Pearly Desire
so far ahead by deep stretch that the idle
photo finish camera turns, and look:
That's me, the one in the long black car
with the motor running.

SOME SAY I RAN GUNS TO CUBAN REBELS

The other day I went down to the saddling
paddock to return a book to my friend Darrell.
When he saw me, he handed the tongue-tie
to an assistant and walked over. We met
at the white railing, my forehead into
the secret space, his into the area
marked Hopeful Anticipation on maps
of Santa Anita.

He retrieved Laughing in the Hills.
"Did you like it?" he asked softly so as
not to disturb the big gelding circling
behind him.
"A lot."
"Yea. That guy writes okay."

Just then a restless owner stamped and coughed
so he said goodbye. It was then I noticed
how the people around us had been leaning in
their ears pink from strain, and I could
hear what they heard: The Word. In code.

Tonight they will whisper about what goes
on out there. They will be talking about
me, the Man in the Satin Jacket, down to
the lint and the secret compartment, not
even betting for awhile, just watching
them run, taking it easy, doing some
light reading.

I'M AMAZED

As she was undressing, shyly
she said, "You know, I don't have all that
much experience."

I felt like I'd been chosen first
for softball. But why? Why is love